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THE MAXX



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PRINTED IN CANADA.

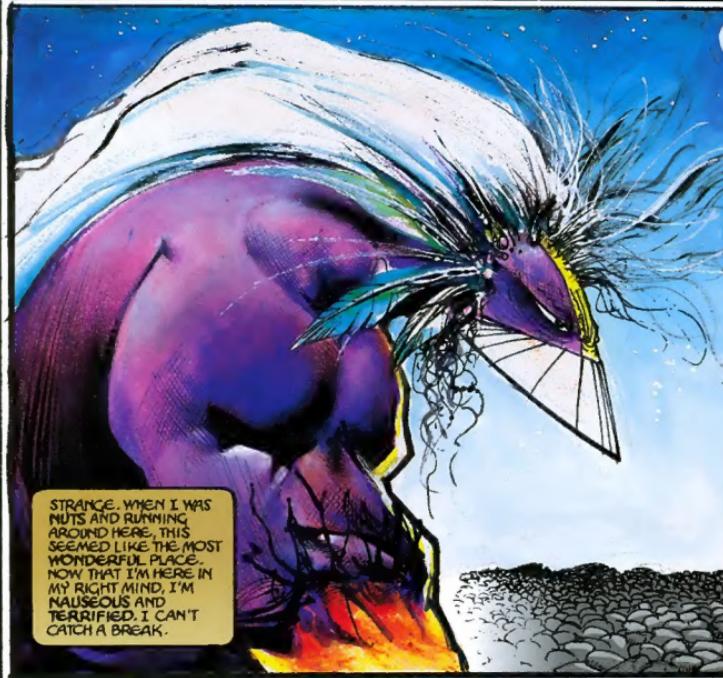


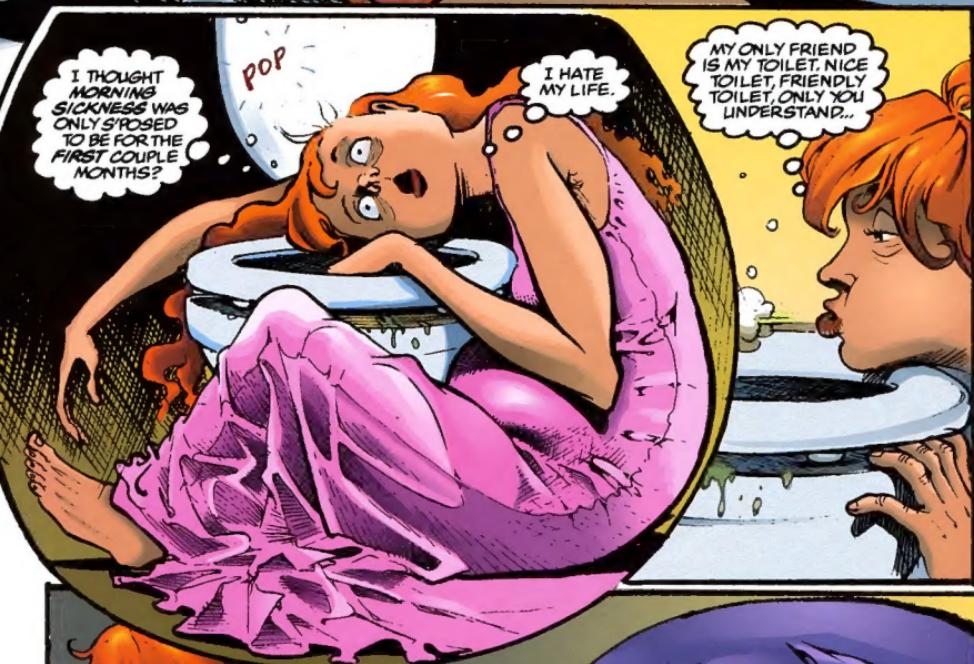
I'M
HERE.

I'M IN PANGAEA...
THE OUTBACK...THE
PRIMITIVE EXPRESSION
OF ALL THAT THE
CIVILIZED MIND
DESires AND FEARS!

EXCEPT THE OUTBACK
I REMEMBER WAS A
LUSH AND VERDANT
GRASSLAND...NOT A
DESERT COVERED
WITH SKULLS!

WELL,
DAMN.





I STILL
DON'T SEE WHY
YOU HAVE TO
CHANGE THE
WHOLE FRONT
OF THE
BUILDING.

'CAUSE I'M CHANGING.
THE WORLD IS CHANGING.
MY HOUSE SHOULD BE
A PART OF--OF...uh-oh--
HORRP:



I GUESS
YOU GUYS ARE
TALKING
NOW?

I GUESS, I
WAS FEELING
ROTEN THIS
MORNING, SO I
SENT ONE OF
THOSE GUYS
OUT TO FIND
MAXX...

AND I CAME,
SHOWING HOW
DISMAL THE
REST OF MY
LIFE IS.
UH-OH...

WHAT?

ACCORDING TO
THESE BLUEPRINTS,
THOSE WORKMEN
JUST CUT THROUGH
A BEARING
WALL.





WHY DID
SHE CALL
ME THAT?

UHHH...!
IT'S
STARTED!

I WILL
TRY!

I WILL MOVE
TOWARDS THE
SOURCE OF
THE DRUMS...!
IGNORE THE
PAIN! LEAP INTO
THE VOID!

AND FINALLY
FIND OUT WHAT
THOSE DAMNED
CHUNG'S MEAN!

FOR I AM THE
MAXX!

CHUNG
CHUNG
CHUNG
CHUNG
CHUNG
CHUNG
CHUNG
CHUNG

AND THAT'S HOW IT HAPPENED.
JUST THAT SIMPLE, I WAS STANDING
HERE, AND I KNEW WHO I WAS!
I REMEMBERED!

BUT EVERYTHING
ELSE IS DIFFERENT.



SOMEHOW ALL
THE VEGETATION
HERE DIED...

AND THE ISZ BRED OUT
OF CONTROL. GENERATION
AFTER GENERATION WITH
NOTHING TO EAT.

THE DEAD ABOVE SMOOTHERED
THE LIVING BELOW... AND STILL
MORE ISZ GREW OUT OF THE
TORTURED SOIL.

AND HERE IS THE
LEOPARD QUEEN'S
ABODE... THE
FORTRESS...
EVEN IT HAS BEEN
ALTERED.

I FOUND MY
WAY HERE. I
DO HAVE ALL
MY MEMORIES
OF THIS LAND.

AND THESE
SKULLS... ARE
ISZ SKULLS!

I REMEMBER HOW THIS
PLACE WOULD TOWER, A
HUNDRED FEET ABOVE THE
JUNGLE FLOOR. NOW IT
BARELY CLEARS THE SKULLS!

I HAVE TO
FIND HER.

MY GODDESS. MY...

...QUEEN.

BRIER
LAPIN! I
KNEW YOU'D
COME!

TAKE OFF
YOUR MASK.
I HAVE TO
BE SURE...

YES, IT'S
YOU, BRIER LAPIN.
YOU'RE AS REAL
AS THE EDGE ON
MY SPEAR!

MY GOD...I'M
A BIG BUNNY
HERE! NOW I'M
REALLY
CONFUSED.

BUT YOUR
HAIR! AND THE
FORTRESS! THEY'VE
CHANGED! HAVE
YOU HEALED,
MY QUEEN?

THE HEALING
INSIDE HAS BEGUN,
BRIER LAPIN. BUT
THE LAND IS STILL
VERY SICK...AND
THE POISON MUST
BE EXPELLED FROM
UNDERNEATH.





SEE? THE VOLCANO!

YEAH. AT THIS RATE, WE'LL GET THERE IN A COUPLE OF DAYS!

YOUR TONGUE IS ODDLY SHARP, BRER LAPIN.

THE CLOSER WE GET TO THE VOLCANO, THE FASTER WE'LL GO. YOU'LL SEE.

I KEPT WANTING TO ASK, "HOW CAN ROCKS FLY?" BUT IN CONTEXT IT SEEMS LIKE A DWEEBY QUESTION.

LIE DOWN AND REST, BRER LAPIN. NO TELLING WHEN WE'LL HAVE THE CHANCE AGAIN.

AND JUST LIKE THAT SHE WAS ASLEEP. WE SWUNG OUT THROUGH THE VOID, WITH ONLY THE WIND WHISPERING AGAINST THE SIDES OF THE ROCK.

MEEP!







WE'RE
HERE!

SHHH...
KEEP YOUR VOICE
DOWN.

EEEP!

WHY?

THE
TEENIEST VOICE
IN THIS VALLEY
WILL REVERBERATE
AND AWAKEN THE
DREADED...

...HOOLY.

THE
WHATTY?

SHOOT. I
CHIPPED OFF
A PIECE.

MRREEP

CAREFUL!

HEY! IT
FLOATS!

THAT LITTLE
ROCK YOU CHIPPED
OFF WILL GO
FLOATING INTO THE
HORIZON, ONLY TO
COME BACK AS A
GIANT BOULDER
AND CRUSH THE
VOLCANO.







HEY! IT'S JUST
WATER!

SILLY
RABBIT! THAT'S
JUST ON
TOP!

...UNDERNEATH...

...THERE'S
SOMETHING
THAT WANTS
TO COME
UP!



After two years of hermitude, I finally broke down and decided to go to San Diego Comic Con this year, but the only day I'll be signing is Saturday. So if yer in town...

There's a bunch of interesting/bizarre Maxx stuff in the future that I'm busting to tell you about, but I can't. Not yet. Two things, though: The Todd Toy is in the works, and from what I've seen, it's way cool. The best part of all is that each Maxx figure will come with a little white ls. (And keep your eyes peeled for collector black lsz in random boxes.) The bad news: They won't be out 'till '96.

The #2 piece of news is that Wizard and I will be releasing a 12-page "Special Preview" thingie to be included in their October issue. I will be drawing some preview material from Issue 21 (to be released in December), along with some Maxx sketchbook stuff.

E-mail us: nghftime@aol.com

Dear Mr. Kieth,

As you may know, there was a bombing here in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. I'm writing you to see if you could dedicate a future issue of The Maxx to the OKC bombing victims. If not, maybe have the OKC bombing mentioned in an upcoming Maxx storyline. Anything to acknowledge that the OKC bombing occurred in the Image universe as well as the real world. I'm just asking for the victims.

(name withheld by request)

Your letter, and the fact that you wrote it, is a more moving testament than anything we could've come up with. Heads (and their hearts) are with everybody in OK-City.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

Why is there a frame of Mr. Gone (from the "Yup. Man, this is going to be a long night" shot) seen in the <SPLAT SQUAWK MEEP SLICE HACK

SLICE MEEP
SQUEEK> lsz
slaughter just
before the "They
are all dead, I have
killed all..." scene
in Episode 4 of the
toon (from Issue 3,
page 8)? (You can only
see it if you frame-by-frame
it on your VCR, or if you

have really sharp eyes, like me.) Is this a subliminal thing?

Your newly recruited
and utterly devoted fan,
Patrick W. Heinske
Garner, NC

I don't have a tape handy—anybody else see
what this guy's talking about?

Dear Sam,

How could you? You printed a letter from the great Olav Beemer and you spelled his name wrong! Have you no shame?

Sincerely,
Augie De Blieck Jr.
N. Haledon, NJ

PS. Oh yeah. I love the cartoon!

Of course I have no shame—look at what I publish every month. That rascal Augie De Blieck is always on my tail, pointing out my mistakes. Then again, we did call him "Angie" a few issues back...Dammit, he's right again! Sorry, Olav.

Dear Sam Kieth,

You should put less blood in comics because it makes killing look fun. If kids see that when they are little, they might kill when they get older. They might think killing is awesome when it is really dangerous.

ERIK TURNER
Kennesaw, GA





It is bad to give that to kids.

Signed,
Brian Coyle
Highland Heights, KY

Killing is dangerous—now there's a concept!

Dear Sam,

Could you please please please have someone get their ear or ears ripped off? I've always wanted to rip someone's ear off, but I'd be happy just to see someone else do it.

Thanks for your time,
R.L.
Atlanta, GA

I just can't make anybody happy...I think we need to change the subject. How about some origin speculation:

Dear Sam,

I've often wondered where you got the idea for such an original concept. The only thing that I can think of is the old movie *Harvey* in which Jimmy Stewart has a 7-foot-tall invisible rabbit spirit/protector called a pooka. Am I right?

Sincerely,
Brian Zeiders

No.

Dear Sam,

The Maxx reads as if you, sir, are doing a version of the oldest recorded tale of sibling rivalry known to man, Cain vs. Abel. Maxx is Abel. Gone

is Cain possessed by Satan. Then again, with the way Maxx shifts dimensions in his dreams (or is it that he's really in dreamtime?), you'd think he was some sort of burnout that even Timothy Leary couldn't help. Weird reading, but the visuals are like a cross-section of Frazetta (natch), Doug Wildey, and V. T. Hamlin. Ah, that last one should give you pause.

Forward to the present. Julie's link and relationship with Maxx are in tatters. She's gone and gotten pregnant, and she practically doesn't care if she sees the baby's father again. Sarah is Maxx's new soulmate, but I can't see that lasting. It's been suggested that Sarah and Julie are sisters or cousins, so Julie's anger in issue 15 seems more natural than one might think. Anyway, judging from Julie's appearance, I'd say she's already three months along, right?

Jacob Gilbert
Troy, NY

Five, actually.

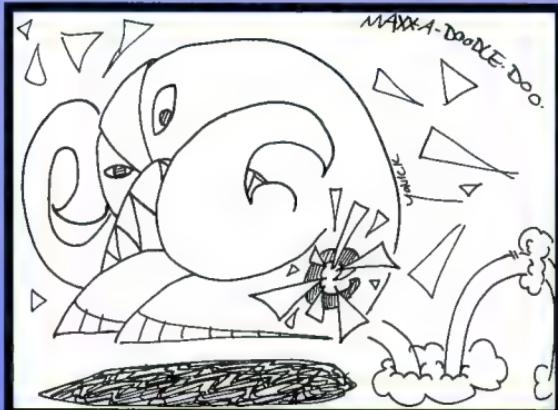
Dear Sam,

Now about this "Maxx is rabbit" thing. I DON'T THINK SO! That is much too obvious. I figured out your little comic, Mr. Kieth. Maxx is not a rabbit. Maxx is a construction worker from Ohio. Now before you print "Does anyone have any idea what he's talking about?", let me show you the similarities:

- 1) They both like Pez and toast
- 2) Neither are cross-dressers (at least I hope not)
- 3) Maxx is constantly trying to figure out his life which won't happen until the comic is cancelled (which won't happen). Construction workers whistle at women they'll never get unless they take a shower and learn some manners (which won't happen). So, basically they both have goals that they will never accomplish.

Am I the only one who can notice these things? Anyway, Maxx rules! Sorry if I offended any construction workers, but somebody had to say it sometime.

JA YONICK
Germany



Josh Vance
Normal, IL
I wish I could be from Normal.

Dear Sam,
Here's what we know so far. Maxx is this purple rabbit dude with a big overbite who, as a child, found Steve Oliff, of Olyoptics, lying in the middle of the road. He had been hit by a car. Maxx put Steve in a shoebox and kept him in the garage. Well, Maxx's mom was driven nuts by this scraping sound that Steve kept making, so she put him out of his misery with a shovel. Mr. Gone is this bum who lives in a cardboard box in

a New York alleyway. Julie Winters is this babe whose pot belly gets a little fatter all the time. She is very evil and has a looong blue cape. She keeps trying to tell Maxx something about his past, but every time she does, Maxx cuts off her head. Bill Loebs is the guy who does the coloring of the comic. Mike Heisler is the guy who writes and draws the comic, and Sam Kieth is the guy who does the lettering. What a great comicbook.

Justin Francis
Fremont, CA

Gadzooks—you have me totally bumfuzzled!

Sam Kieth,

The Maxx is wonderful, but I have just one question. Well, actually two:

- 1) How badly was Maxx hurt when he was mugged in issue 15. I mean, he was just lying there behind his box for what seems like hours.
- 2) Is it just me, or does the shadow of one of the prisoners on page 12 look just a little bit like Maxx's?

Venus-Bob
Anonymous, OH

I have just one answer. Well, actually two:

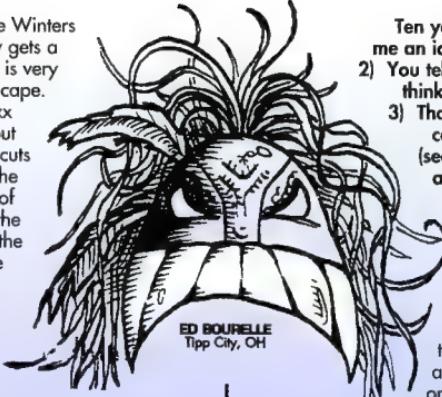
- 1) His butt wasn't as badly bruised as his pride.
- 2) The shadow thing is just you, but we did screw up, since I meant to mention that the guy in the jail was Fridge.

Dear Maxx Creww,

- 1) I think you should put out a make-your-own-Pez-dispenser contest where we convert ordinary Pez dispensers into Maxx characters and the winner gets a free crate of Pez refills!!! How bout it???
- 2) What type of music do Maxx and Sarah listen to?? (I know it's been asked, but I think you should tell us more.) Do they like Smashing Pumpkins (I do); how about Pizzicato 5 or Starchildren. I bet they like the Afghan Whigs.
- 3) I think your comic has the coolest letter column in the world.
- 4) I can't figure out issue #14.
- 5) I can't figure out any of the other issues.

Ben Steidel
Danville, CA

- 1) The Pez People have been talked to; here's the scoop. Pez lost mucho money on a Happy Days dispenser in the '70's while trying to cash in on a fad, so they like to wait at least a decade to make sure we're not just a flash in the pan. So until we're ten years older, we'll have to settle for making/trading bootleg dispensers (I have four so far, thanz to industrious fans). No contest, though. Our mailperson has a bad back.



ED BOURIELLE
Tipp City, OH

Ten years? Saaa...that gives me an idea for Ish 21...

- 2) You tell me. What do you guys think they listen to?
- 3) That's because we have the coolest fans in the world (see, I can kiss butt just as good as anyone).
- 4) Get in line.
- 5) That's an even longer line.

Dear Sam,

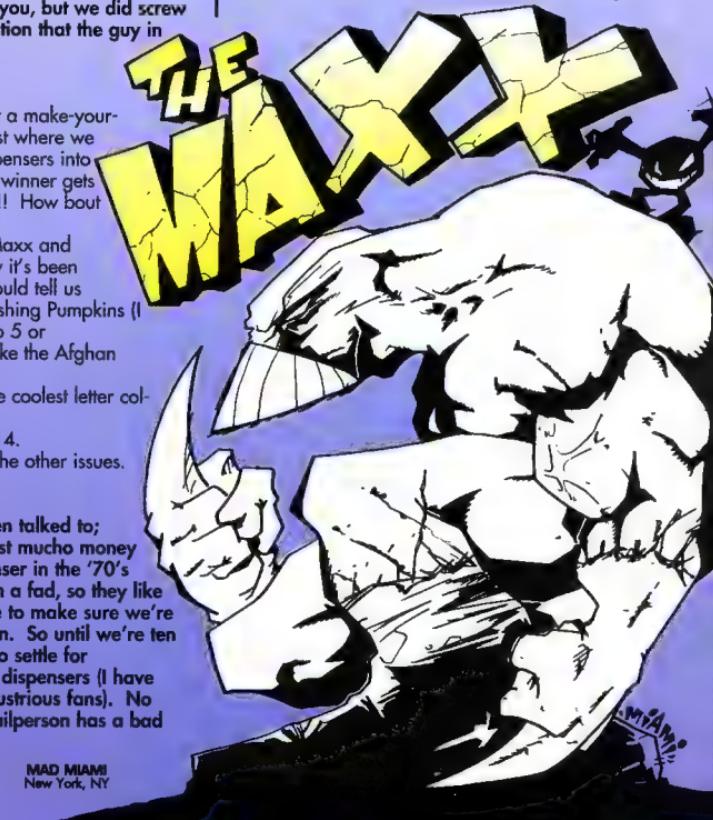
I love your Maxx comics I only need 6 more to get 1 through 15. I write about The Maxx all the time on my computer and draw The Maxx all the time and I

got most of my friends to like The Maxx. I've seen all the episodes of The Maxx and I love them. What I want to know is will you ever show The Maxx's face and will The Maxx end at comic number 20 I hope not The Maxx is my favorite. I even got my mom interested in Maxx well keep up the Maxximum great work

Your Maxximum fan
Matt Kwiatkowski

Use the word "Maxx" much? I love the way you do away with boring stuff like punctuation. Get right to the meat, I say.

You saw Maxx's face in this issue and boy,



what a shocker. I mean, a rabbit—Wow! Nobody saw that coming, right? BUT—just because we saw his face in the Outback doesn't mean we will ever see it in this dimension. (Those of us who occasionally visit this dimension, that is.)

And no, Matt, I refuse to end with Ish 20. That would be too easy...

Hey Sam,

This letter is to Chris, who also wrote in to Head to Head last issue:

I just want to say Thanks a lot!! You got me hooked on reading The Maxx and now I can't seem to get anything done. If I'm at work I'm thinking about the next Maxx issue. If I'm at play I'm thinking about the next issue of The Maxx! In fact the other night while me and my girlfriend were making passionate whoopie, I accidentally cried out **MAXX!!!** Talk about embarrassing!!! So if you do read this (and I know you will because you always read the letter pages) I just want you to know that I don't get mad, I get Maxx, er umm, even!! Dammit I'm doing it again!!!!

Thanks for your indulgence Sam and keep up the great work!!!

Explanation-point-happy Joe
Menominee, MI

Dear Sam Kieth,

Your Fridge/Isz story seemed to me like

MAD MIAMI
New York, NY

some old Strange Tales comic, or some other old EC title. I liked the way I could only see the Is's sneakers sliding deeper into the shadows, because besides adding tension, it took advantage of your smooth storytelling, which is what I like most about your art. I also thought it was kind of cool to see Fridge again since we haven't seen him since issue 1. Now I half suspect a similar type of story involving Sgt. Ocono and his suspicions of the little creepy guys he seems to be getting a lot of lately.

Also, when I saw Maxx get mugged I thought (besides thinking what Maxx might've had that someone else could have possibly wanted) how deluded Maxx really is. How can he expect to protect the lives of others if he can't even keep himself from getting mugged?

Thanks for your time,

Tony Vance
Thousand Oaks, CA

That's the point.

Dear Sam,

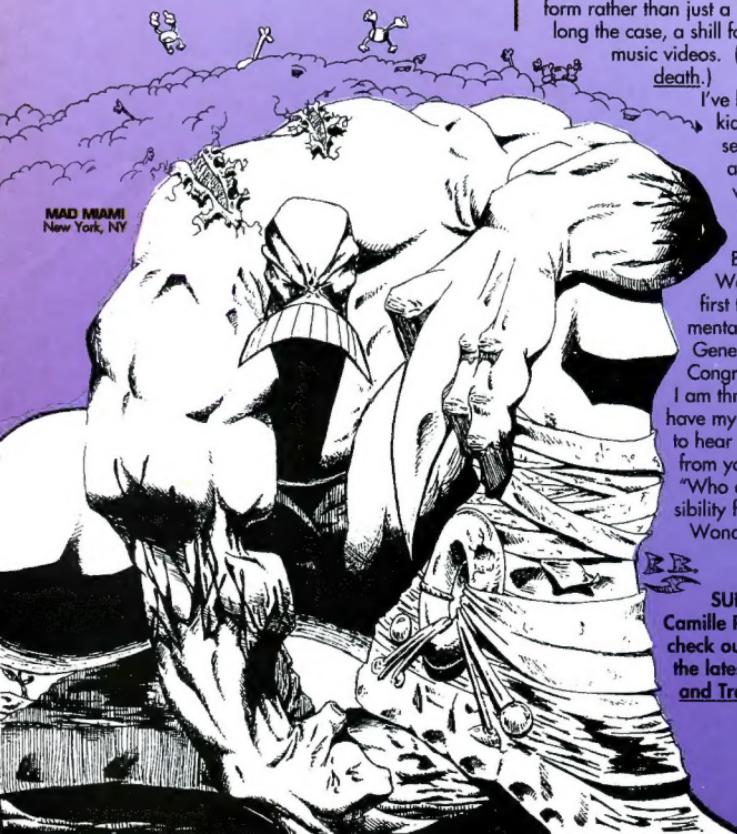
Thanks a lot for sending the tapes of the first two episodes of The Maxx! Students had stopped me in the halls telling me about it in April. I've been taping it since then, but I was missing those early episodes.

The show is terrific! So eerie, fascinating, and mysterious. It's obviously a landmark in TV broadcasting, establishing animation as an art form rather than just a "cartoon" or, as was too long the case, a shill for trendy special effects for music videos. (The latter was done to death.)

I've been lamenting that the kids of the '90's have no sense of how film was avant-garde in the '60's, when college students my age saw tons of experimental film, from Stan Brakbage to gritty early Warhol. The Maxx for the first time captures that experimental, mind-bending mode for Generation X on a broad scale. Congratulations!! And of course I am thrilled beyond words to have my poster in the show—and to hear spoken the great words from your original printed strip, "Who are you to assume responsibility for their lives?" Wonderful!

Best wishes,
Camille Paglia

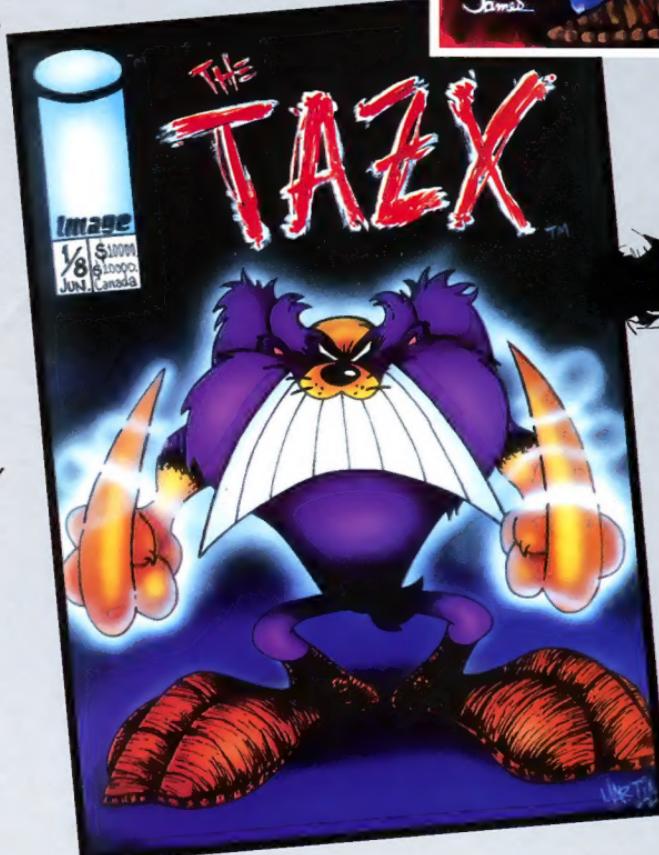
SURELY you know who Camille Paglia is by now! And check out Julie's appearance in the latest Paglia book, Vamps and Tramps, if you dare.



THE WAKY

fan art

JAMES DEAN CONKLIN
New York, New York



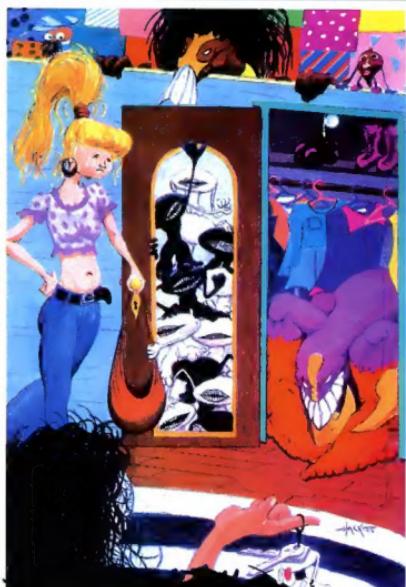
MARTIN LOPEZ
Mexico

ANDREA MINOJA

Padova, Italy



MICK DIDIER
France



JONATHAN HACKLER
High Point, North Carolina

MAXX'S
Room
KEEP OUT



DAN ROMAN
New Babylon, New York